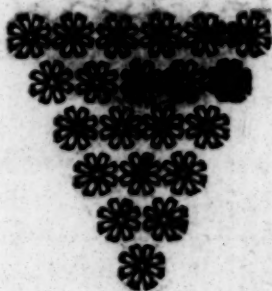


A Curious

COLLECTION

Of Genuine and Authentick

LETTERS.



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COLLECTION

LETTERS



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COLLECTION, &c.

NUMBER I.

to Queen Ann

MADAM,

THE violence and ambition of the enemies of our family, and of the Monarchy, have too long kept at a distance those, who by all the obligations of nature and duty, ought to be more firmly united, and have hindred us from the proper means and endeavours of a better understanding between us, which could not fail to produce the most ~~un~~happy effects to ourselves, our family, and our bleeding country.

But whatever the success may be, I have resolved now to break thro' all reserve, and to be the first in an endeavour so just and necessary. The natural affection I bear you, the regard I shall have to the charge of my dying father, to remember you were his daughter and my sister, the consideration of our mutual interest, honour and safety, and the duty I owe to GOD and my country, are the true motives that perswade me to this address, and to do all that is possible, for me to come to a perfect union with you.

It was not any vain ambition, but evident Honour and necessity that forced me to take the title, and to claim the right belonging to me, by all laws, divine and human—I had deserved to be thought the unworthy offspring of our father, and royal ancestors, if I had been capable of foregoing their inheritance, or renouncing my birth-right.

Tho' I can never abandon my own just claim, but with my life, yet as I consider with great pity, the sad corruption of our country, so the sincere love I bear to yourself makes me put the most affectionate allowances and constructions on your accepting, what perhaps you thought at that time, you durst not refuse, without danger to your own person.

And you may be assured, Madam, that I am desirous to owe to you, rather than to any living, to be put in the way of recovering my right. It is for yourself, that a work so just, and so glorious is reserved. The voice of God and nature call you to it: The earnest desires of your father and grandfather, and our royal ancestors in heaven, enjoyn it: The preservation of our family, the preventing of unnatural wars require it: The publick good, and welfare of our country, recommend it to you, to rescue it from present and future evils; and withal, your own good nature promises it, which is your peculiar character, and which has appeared in your clemency to many of my faithful friends and servants, whose lives were so greedily sought after; and I take this opportunity thankfully to acknowledge your goodness in it. That goodness and your natural affection to a brother, from whom you never received any injury, cannot but incline your heart to do him justice, and to retrieve the peace, honour, and felicity of your country, by the alteration of a settlement, that is so prejudicial to your brother and your family, so contrary to the laws, and to your own immortal honour and happiness, and which must necessarily involve these unhappy nations further in blood and confusion, for many ages. It is in your power, Madam, to prevent all these fatal consequences, to gain yourself a just and endless renown, to give a new life and lustre to your family, and to secure to yourself the perpetual love and gratitude of a brother to so just, so kind, and so wise a sister.

As it is in your power, I cannot suffer myself to doubt of your good inclinations, nor of the pleasure you will have to do this justice. And I do here assure you
upon

upon honour, that in that case, no terms of accomodation which you can desire for yourself, shall be refused by me. And if you will admit of any friend in my name to discourse with you, or any entrusted by you, you shall find that what I have now said, I mean it in the utmost extent, which your own reason or your own heart can propose.

I am satisfied, Madam, that if you will be guided by your own thoughts, you will readily comply with so just a proposal, and prefer your brother, the last of your name, to so very remote a Relation, whose friendship you have no reason to rely on, or to be fond of, and who will leave the government to foreigners of another language, another interest, and even of a religion different from that of the nation.

As to my own religion, if it is an objection, yet the severest Censor cannot say it is my fault. And I do assure you, Madam, that as I shall not refuse any proper opportunity of free conversation, and of enquiring more fully into any essential difference in these matters, so whatever shall be my own private opinion, it is my unalterable resolution to make the law of the land the rule of my government, and to preserve the Church of England, as by law established.

In perfecting this happy union of our hearts and measures, to which I now entreat you, many reasons may convince you, that no time is to be lost; and the present temper of the nation seems no way indisposed to resettle the government on its just and ancient foundations, or to approve of so happy an agreement: it rests on you, Madam, to conclude it; and it will be a particular blessing to us and our country, if the rights of the crown, and happiness of the people may, once more, be settled without blood; surely all the most sacred ties imaginable oblige us to endeavour it.

As I shall always have the satisfaction of having proposed this fair and friendly way, preferably to all others, so I shall on my part neglect nothing, that may further contribute to a true harmony, and a happy understand-

ing between us, and for restoring the real honour and felicity of a great and brave people, who are almost sinking under present weights, and have reason to fear greater; who have no reason to hate me, and whom I must still, and do love as my own.

I have made this effort towards our mutual happiness and a friendly accomodation with a true brotherly affection, with the plainness and sincerity that becomes our rank and relation, and in the most private manner, I could at present contrive, and will be guided by you in the prosecution of it, relying entirely on your knowledge and experience, as to the means and instruments, and assuring you, that I shall have the greater pleasure to depend on your advice and friendship in all things, not only as a sister, but as a mother, for as such, I hope you will give me reason and leave to esteem you: And you shall find me as dutiful, as if I were indeed your own child; and I shall always regard, and honour, and treat you in all respects as Queen of England.

And now, Madam, pray allow me to conjure you, as you tender the honour of God, the salvation of your own soul, the establishment and preservation of our ancient royal family, and the safety and welfare of our country, that you would meet me in this friendly way of composing our difference, by which only we can hope for those good effects which will make us both happy, yourself more glorious than in all the other parts of your life, and your memory dear to posterity.

I have spoke to you from my heart; I have delivered my own soul; and I have a better opinion of you than to doubt of success, for I am, with all esteem, as well as affection,

Madam,

1712.

Your * * *,

N U M B E R

NUMBER II.

*To the Reverend Mr. Charles Lesley. Urbino, Nov. 29.
1717. N. S.*

I THANK you for the particuar account you give me, in your's of the 29th of October, of the affairs of Dr. Hoadly before the Convocation, to which there was a stop put by a Prorogation, to prevent an enquiry into his Doctrine, and (in all appearance) a just Censure thereof, in their own Ecclesiastical way. This, with many other proceedings of the Elector of Hanover, seem to be designed by providence, to shew the Church and people of England, how little secure their lives and privileges are, under the present Government; for by the best information I can have, the Intrinsick Spiritual Power of the Church, or the Power of the Keys, as it was exercis'd by the Apostles, and the most pure and primitive Church, in the three first Centuries after Christ, have ever been thought an Essential Right of the Church of England, so that It may enquire into the Doctrines of its own members, and inflict Ecclesiastical Censures, not extending to any Civil Punishment. Now the Civil Government putting a Stop to such proceedings, is in effect the taking away that undoubted Right of the Church, which if it please God to restore me to my own just Right, I am firmly resolved to maintain to it. The many and repeated assurances I have given, of maintaining inviolably to the Church of England, all her just Rights and Privileges secured to her by so many Laws, of confirming those Rights in our first Parliament, and of giving what further reasonable security, on that head, shall then seem good to our people, is, I think more than enough to quiet and satisfy the most scrupulous and apprehensive, as to the security that Church will enjoy under our lawful government: And if people would but compare what they now feel and see, with what they may then expect, the conclusion cannot but be very much to
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my advantage, for opening of the Eyes of those now deluded, and convincing them, that doing Justice to me, is the only solid foundation for a lasting peace and happiness both in Church and State.

Having so fair an opportunity, I could not but signify thus much to you, and you may communicate it to whom you think fit. I doubt not but the Convocation will now soon meet again, for it would be too gross to put it off a second time, and then to be sure, it will take the case of Dr. Hoadly again under its consideration, and I shall be glad to hear from you what *in* is done it.

I am the more glad of your good health, that you know how concerned I was at its not allowing you to stay longer in this climate, which agrees better with my health, than my inclination, but I hope in God's Mercy better times may come. I wish we may soon meet where we both so much desire to be, where I shall be able to shew you the singular regard I have for you.

J. R.

NUMBER

NUMBER III. *to some Acquaintance*
of the late Duke of Argyle's May 25, 1741.
 R * * *.

I Received in due time the letter or paper written by your friend in March last, with another short paper in the same hand, that accompanied it. I have perused both with attention and satisfaction and can easily remark in them a fund of experience, good sense and affection for our Country and my Family.

I am no way surprized that my character and principles should be so little known where he is: Neither I nor my children have many occasions of declaring our sentiments; 'tis true we make no secret of them, but those who may be acquainted with them, are but too often under a necessity of concealing what they may know on such heads.

It would be a subject of just concern to me, if any who profess my religion, should by their writings or discourse, have given grounds to attribute ill maxims so contrary to its true principles, as those mentioned in your friend's letter. And if any of my well-wishers in general, declare for arbitrary power, they act equally against my sentiments and interest: For as to those who are bribed tools to serve the present arbitrary government, surely no body can consider them as my friends, whatever their pretensions may be. But these are inconveniences and misfortunes for which I cannot be answerable, and ~~for~~ which I have it but little *to* in my power to put any remedy, while the enemies of my family make, to be sure, the most of every thing that can tend to our disadvantage, and can do it without restraint.

It is therefore, no wonder that I should be so much misrepresented, and so little known; were my conduct in the town of R * * * put in a true light, it would not a little contribute to dissipate the ill grounded fears, and jealousies of many. And as for my sincerity in
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what I may promise, even during my exile, I think without having recourse to my present character, no doubt should be had on that head by any reasonable man, who will rightly consider the present situation of *our* family. We have now been more than fifty years out of our Country. We have been bred, and have lived in the school of adversity, unacquainted with flattery and power, which always attend princes of the throne, and equally unacquainted with certain ambitious views, which are too common to them. If long experience teaches us how little we can depend on the friendship of foreign powers, whatever the view of a present interest may have formerly, or may hereafter induce them to undertake in our favour; our Restoration, no doubt, would be much more agreeable, both to our subjects, and to ourselves, were it brought about without any foreign assistance. But should it happen that any foreign power contributed to place me on the throne, it must be visible to all thinking men, that I can neither hope to keep it, nor enjoy peace and happiness upon it, but by gaining the love and affection of my subjects.

I am far from approving the mistakes of former reigns, I see and feel the effects of them, and should be void of all reflection, did I not propose to avoid them with the utmost care; and therefore I do not entertain the least thought of assuming the government on the footing my family left it. I am fully resolved to make the law the rule of my government, and absolutely disclaim any pretensions to a dispensing power.

I am sensible, that the ruin and oppression with which our country is distressed, may make the generality of the people desirous, of a change at any rate; but for my part, as natural, as just as it is for me to desire that I, and my family should be restored to our just rights, I am far, at my age especially, from desiring that should happen, but upon an honourable and solid foundation, cemented by a mutual confidence

fidence between King and people, by which the welfare and happiness of both may be effectually secured.

It is manifest, that not only justice, but the interest of the nation requires my restoration, because I can never have an interest separate from that of my country, nor any hopes of peace and tranquility for my family, but by cultivating the affections of my people, and having only in view their honour and happiness. I am persuaded there are many persons of great talents and merit, who would be of this opinion, were my true sentiments and dispositions known to them, tho' they are not at this time looked upon as ~~my~~ well-wishers to my cause, neither can I wonder they should have prejudices against it; they have been bred up in them from their youth, and constantly confirmed in them by all the artifices imaginable: But I hope the time is not far distant, in which they will see things in a true light, and if they lay aside all unjust prejudices against me, and lay as much to heart, as I do, the happiness and prosperity of our country, I make no doubt we shall soon be entirely satisfied with one another.

It is fit your friend should know that I have by me a draught of a declaration, which there never hath as yet been an occasion to publish. This declaration was drawn in consequence of the sentiments and reflections expressed in this letter. It contains a general indemnity, without exception, for all that has passed against me and my family; a solemn engagement to maintain the church of England as by law established, in all her rights privileges, possessions and immunities whatsoever. And as I am utterly averse to all animosities and persecutions on account of religion, it also contains a promise to grant and allow a toleration to all protestant dissenters: I also express in it an aversion to the suspending of the Habeas-Corpus act, as well as to the loading my subjects with unnecessary taxes, or the raising of them in a manner burthensome to them; and especially to the introducing of foreign excises, and all such methods as may have hitherto been devised and pursued to acquire arbitrary power at the expence of the liberty and property

perty of the subjects. And besides, there is a general article of my readiness to settle all that may relate to the welfare and happiness of the nation, both in civil and ecclesiastical matters, by the sincere advice and concurrence of a free parliament.

In fine, were I known, and were justice done to my sentiments, it would, I am convinced, make many alter their present way of thinking, and induce them to concur heartily in measures for my restoration, as the most effectual means to restore peace and happiness to our country. I thank God I am without resentment against any body; I shall never retain any memory of past mistakes, and shall never make any other distinction amongst my subjects, but such as true merit and faithful services may authorize and require. I have ever had the greatest abhorrence of all dissimulation, and will certainly never promise any thing during my exile, but what I shall perform after my restoration.

NUMBER IV.

to y^e A Bp of Canterbury

1716.

Amongst the many indignities under which we have suffered, nothing has moved us so much as a certain paper, that has reached us at our return to this place, published in your name at the head of your clergy, wherein you declare an abhorrence of all designs of our Restoration, and a particular prejudice to our person, as a Prince whose re-establishment would be dangerous to the liberties of his people and the Welfare and security of the Church of England. What we have declared upon these heads, we were in hopes would have satisfied the mind of all men.

We have called God and Man to witness, that we desire nothing so much as the happiness of our people, and that the most inveterate of our enemies have but to repent and be forgiven. We have declared, and we repeat it again, that whatsoever relates to their religious or civil rights, shall be left to be thoroughly considered and settled by the whole body of the clergy, in a free convocation, and of the Nation, in a free parliament, assembled.

If then, religion, liberty, and property be in danger, if the publick funds should not be safe, the national debt provided for, taxes diminished, grievances redressed, credit, commerce and industry restored; if any one Article, of the least moment to the welfare and security of the church or state should be wanting, let the blame lie at their door to whose wisdom and conscience we refer it. Make yourselves happy, let that be your care, it shall be ours to preserve you so.

What has been said and daily published of us by a few mercenary writers, who are hired to asperse and paint us in the most odious colours, gives us no pain. But when the Metropolitan of a Church (whose principles are founded on the most religious loyalty, a church for which our royal grandfather of blessed memory chose to sacrifice both his life and crown, a church *that* owns no supreme governor under God but its King)

shall appear at the head of his province renouncing his legitimate sovereign in terms of bitterness and reproach, we must own ourselves moved, as a father would be to see his own son lift up his hand against him. It is the paternal concern that has prompted us to write this to you, without any spirit of resentment as you may perceive, but only to prevent you and others from continuing in that uncharitable way of thinking, and to incline you to bring into the right way, that part of your flock, which you have so openly and unadvisedly led astray.

The church of England has always been reputed the bulwark of the monarchy, and shall be always favour'd and protected by us.

NUMBER

NUMBER V.

To Lady JANE HOLT.

Dear Sister,

MY Name has been so often mentioned of late in the publick prints, and consequently the subject of private conversation, that my personal friends (you in particular) may with reason expect to know from myself, what steps I have taken, and what were the reasons of my present resolutions.

As to the reasons of my conduct, I do not think it proper to write them directly to you; I must refer you to some papers you will soon see published through all Europe: I will not trust the good manners, or the good nature of my enemies, by writing any thing to you, that might expose you to trouble, for it would sharpen the prosecutions begun against me, if you should suffer the least inconvenience for your tenderness to me

Whatever relates to myself gives me no uneasiness, every virulent vote, every passionate reproach, and every malicious calumny against me, are so many real commendations of my conduct; and while you and my sister Lucy are permitted to live quietly and securely, I shall think our family has met with no misfortune, and has no claim therefore to the compassion of its truest friends.

I know your concern and affection for me, and I write chiefly to give you comfort, not to receive any from you, for I thank God I have an easy contented mind, and that I want no comfort; I have some hopes, I have no fears, which is more than some of your Norfolk neighbours can say of themselves. I desire your prayers for the success of my wishes, and the prosperity of my family. I scorn the false pretended compassion of my enemies, and it would grieve me much more to receive the real pity of my friends. I shall not wonder if at first you be affected with the warmth of
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the proceedings against me, and should shew some concern at the attempts to strip our family of its title, and to rob them of their estates, but you will soon change your Mind, when you consider that my real honour does not depend on Walpole, or his master's pleasure: That a faction may attain a man without corrupting his blood, and that an estate seized for a time, by violence and arbitrary power, is not irrecoverably lost. The word Late is now become the most honourable epithet of the peerage; it is an higher title than that of Grace, and whenever you hear me spoke of in that manner, I beg you to think as I do, that I have received a mark of honour, a mark dignified by the Duke of Ormond, Earl Marishal, and others——.

You that have often read Lord Clarendon's history, must needs know, that during the reign of Cromwell, and the rump-parliament, the whole peerage of England was stiled, The Late House of Lords. There were then no want of Late Dukes, Late Earls, and Late Bishops; and why should that now be reckoned a reproach to a single peer, which was then the distinguishing title to the whole body? Was that impious usurper Cromwell the fountain of honour? Had he who murdered one King, any more power to taint the blood of his fellow-subjects, than his illustrious successor, who had fixed the price upon the head of another? For as Lord Harcourt finely observes in his speech on Dr. Sacheverel, there is little or no difference between a wet martyrdom or a dry one. Can a high commission court at present, or a secret committee tarnish the honour of a family? Is it a real disgrace to be condemned by Macklesfield, Harcourt, Townshend, or Trevor? Is it a dishonour to be robbed of a private fortune, by those who have stripped the fatherless, and widow, who have sold their country, who have plundered the publick? No, my dear sister, assure yourself that this unjust prosecution is a lasting monument erected by the honour of our family: It will serve to render it illustrious to after-ages and to at-

tone

tone for the unhappy mistakes of any of our misguided ancestors. If it should end with me, it would however, have out-lived the liberty of England.

Those honours which we received at first from the crown can never be more gloriously interred, than in the defence of the injured rights of the crown, than in the cause of the rightful monarch of Britain, the greatest of princes, and the best of masters: But I forget myself by enlarging too far on a subject that may not be so conveniently mentioned in a letter to you. My zeal for my country, my duty to my sovereign, my affection to you, and my respect to my family, and its true honour have carried on my pen further than I intended. I will only add, that no change in my circumstances, ever shall lessen my tender concern for you, or my sister Lucy, to whom I desire you would present my love, and charge her, as she values my friendship, never to marry without my consent. Be assured, that no distance of place, nor length of time, shall abate my affection for you, and my enemies shall find, whenever I return to England, it shall be with honour to myself, and with joy to my friends, to all those, I mean, who wish well to the church of England and to their native country. Neither shall any thing ever tempt me to abandon that cause, which I have deliberately embraced or to forsake that religion wherein I was educated. Wherever I am, I shall always be, dear sister, your

Sincere friend

Madrid, June
19, N.S. 1726.

And Brother,

WHARTON.

N U M B E R

NUMBER VII.

July, 1726.

I Know I should not take up your time with trifles, but the following is such out-of-the-way news, that I believe at your leisure you may read it for Irish news. I was lately at the bishop of Clogher's, to whom I gave your duty, and where I heartily drank your health, and his lordship began it, and desired me, in my next to you, to give you his affectionate service.

His lordship received a letter from the late duke of Wharton, from Madrid, which is thought to be a masterpiece, for the elegance of stile, and strength of reasoning; I cannot pretend to give his words, but the substance, to the best of my remembrance, is, That he did not doubt but the bishop would be surprized to hear from him from Madrid, and that the reason of his giving the bishop the trouble of the letter was, that he had always observ'd, that the bishop had a steady affection for the discipline and worship of the church of Ireland, and that he had often heard the Irish divines with pleasure, and he hoped with some profit too; but that he had of a long time considered, that the want of lectures on the divine right of episcopacy, was the great occasion of such numbers of schismatics and sectaries of all sorts; and though he could not propose at present, to be able to allow a sufficient fund for that purpose, yet he enclosed to the bishop a letter of attorney in due form to receive a hundred pounds (or thereabouts) that was due to him, as one of the privy council of Ireland, and that it should be laid out to interest at five pounds, and that allowed to such a man as the bishop should appoint to preach one sermon yearly, on the subject a fore-mentioned; and he hoped, that when the usefulness of the design was known, others would contribute more; but as he had the honour to be first in Ireland, he begged leave to recommend the text, which is in Heb. v. 4. "And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God as was Aaron.—The bishop has not applied for the money as yet.

NUMBER

NUMBER VII.

From *Mr Wagstaffe* protestant Chaplain
An Extract of a Letter, &c.

As to the story you mention I can't conceive from whence it should arise, being contrary to truth and all probability. Nothing can be more reverse to your friend's character than moroseness. He is a gentleman of many good qualities, but his courteous manner, and the affableness of his temper are so remarkably visible and conspicuous, that you may be sure they are very great strangers to him, that can be persuaded he has the least spark of ill-nature about him; and so far is it from being matter of fact, that his servants can't live with him, or that I am leaving your friend on that account with all speed, that I don't remember any one servant that has left him since I came hither, and I believe no one designs to do it. And for myself, I assure you, I am not going to leave the gentleman; and if I was, you may depend on it, that it could never be upon that account, for I have found your friend a quite different person from what this story represents him; I have found him a person of candour and great good-nature, fond of encouraging, and forward to oblige those about him, insomuch that he sent for me some time since, only to let me know (as he was pleased with much goodness to say) how much he approved of my conduct, and how great a satisfaction it was to have so quiet and inoffensive person in my station here. I may modestly mention this, because there is no positive merit in the thing, and it shews how willing he is, to lay hold of an opportunity to drop a kind and endearing word, how little difficulty there is in pleasing him, and how impossible it is to think of leaving your friend upon the motive suggested."

N. B. The occasion of writing the above letter, was an idle report which had been spread, as if the gentleman had been obliged to quit his master's service on account of some unkind treatment he had met with.

F I N I S.

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